



Call before the Housewarming Party

Posted by **Pierluigi Oliverio** on Monday, August 01, 2011



City parks like San Jose's Municipal Rose Garden make neighborhoods more livable and homes more valuable. Glenn Franco Simmons photo.

About twice a month, I get an inquiry from someone who is considering purchasing a home in my council district. I think it is good idea as it shows they are doing their due diligence.

Councilmembers are often the conduit in which information flows about neighborhoods. We are on the receiving end of emails, phone calls and conversations at the grocery store where residents share information and perspectives that they often do not want to vent in a public forum amongst their neighbors. Thus councilmembers are able to have both a top-level and detail-oriented perspective of the neighborhoods in their districts.

The inquiries are generally the same from prospective residents, as they want to know about the current and future status of the neighborhood. They ask questions like: Will the road will be paved in the near future? Does the street have a lot of car traffic? May I chop down the tree(s)? Will new stores be coming to the neighborhood? Will the public school be closed to reduce traffic? Will industrial buildings with their noise and truck traffic stay or go away? What is going to happen with that empty lot? Does the street culture allow for privacy or is it a "chatty" neighborhood? There is never a better time to be candid with someone that is going to purchase a home. Same would

be true for renting however inquiries from people that rent are less frequent.

Some of the prospective residents take my comments and say thanks and I never hear from them again, while others have purchased their new home and in many cases I have developed a new positive constituent relationship.

In 1993, I moved into a condominium development. My condo was located in a transitional neighborhood that had its fair share of crime. I was told a lot of things about the area including that the area around the condo would be an “artsy” area within a few years. I was also told that a park would be built across the street. The reality is, it took almost 10 years to build out the 140 unit complex and unfortunately the rumored park that was supposed to go across the street...is still not there.

Professional Realtors are good people working hard for both buyers and sellers. However, disclosures cannot possibly cover every angle of a neighborhood. Realtors do not control government, recessions or other private property owners.

Cities are constantly evolving and changing. But it seems that significant change is at a snail’s pace with a flat economy, and neighborhoods are more likely to stay the same versus experience radical change. So in conclusion: If you’re looking to move into a neighborhood and you’re curious about the surrounding area you should contact your respective local elected official and ask for their viewpoint.

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